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FOREIGN DEPARTMENT

IN CHARGE OF

LAVINIA L. DOCK



ORGANIZATION NOTES

THE annual meeting of the Matrons' Council was held in January at St. Bartholomew's Hospital, Miss Isla Stewart presiding, when the report for the year was read, reviewing the work and actions of the council.

We see that the Matrons' Council takes a much more active part in general nursing affairs than does our own Superintendents' Society, and goes on record in expressing the standards held by its members in a way that might well be emulated by our society, for this repeated affirmation of standards has a real influence in shaping public opinion and in educating both laity and nurses.

Thus the council took an active part in the agitation for the Midwives' Bill, which held such a prominent place for a while in the attention of medical men, nurses, and legislators in England.

In regard to nursing in the navy we quote the following extract:

"As it was announced early in the year that Inspector-General Henry C. Woods, M.D., M.V.O., was engaged in preparing a scheme for an increase of the nursing staff on his Majesty's ships in time of war and national emergency, and that a reserve of naval nurses, male and female, was to be established, the council forwarded to the Earl of Selborne, First Lord of the Admiralty, a copy of the memorandum presented to the Admiralty by a deputation of the Matrons' Council in 1900. It is regrettable to have to record that the new regulations issued in connection with Queen Alexandra's Royal Naval Nursing Service are very disappointing. No Nursing Board and no matron-in-chief are appointed, as in the case of the sister service, and the trend of the whole document is to show a lack of comprehension of the requirements of modern nursing on the part of this government department."

The council also deputed a delegate to appear before a Committee on Nursing the Sick Poor in Workhouses to give evidence on behalf of the council. These workhouses, which appear to correspond with our almshouse hospitals, have been the scene of the most extreme friction for some time past, evidently resulting from a well-meaning but utterly unintelligent man-management, by which trained nurses were put under untrained people, young doctors and incompetent wardens were running the housekeeping and nursing, and a general state of chaos prevailing, with helpless patients falling out of bed, Sairey Gamps giving carbolic acid for medicine, young medicos complaining to the Guardians that the matron would not do as she was told (by them), and good, trained women resigning in despair because they were hampered in every attempt at system. It is to be hoped that the testimony of capable women may help to improve this muddle. The recommendations of Mrs. Wates, the council delegate, were as follows:

"Properly qualified nurses are little inclined to workhouse nursing, and that

for several reasons. It is hopeless to expect nurses to remain working *under any conditions* in lonely workhouses miles away from a town.

"They have *no hope of promotion* as an incentive to such work.

"They find their training no qualification for the best post in such institutions. They work under a matron, chosen simply because she is the wife of the master, with little or no experience of institutional work, and no knowledge of the special work of the nurse.

"Many nurses complain of *small salaries, poor food and accommodation*.

"The work is uninteresting and monotonous, and nurses find, if they remain long at it, it is difficult or impossible to get posts in other institutions.

"The inevitable friction where nurses work under such *divided authority* as now obtains in numbers of workhouses makes it impossible for a wholesome and necessary discipline to be enforced; habits of laxity and disloyalty are the result, which are as much feared by good nurses as by good matrons, consequently the reputation of the workhouse nurse suffers.

"In my opinion these difficulties can only be met by the appointment of matrons who are trained nurses, and who have gained experience in superintending the work of others in institutions.

"Educated and trained women would end the difficulty, and there are numbers of suitable women who would be ready to fill these posts as they fall vacant.

"There is nothing in the 'order' or in the details of work to hinder capable and experienced women from undertaking it.

"Trained matrons understand nurses and their work, can help them in emergencies, have sympathy with them in their difficulties, and will be capable of superintending the female staff.

"Such a matron will require, of course, separate suitable quarters and a good salary.

"In the larger institutions she will need an assistant, who must also be trained in nursing. The nurses will then aspire to such posts as may in time lead to matronships.

"Until such time as trained matrons be appointed in all workhouses as a temporary arrangement the superintendent nurse will be required; but I am entirely opposed to give her the entire control of infirmary and making her independent of the matron where the infirmary is not under separate administration. It is subversive of discipline, and the friction which it always entails will in some way react to the disadvantage of the patients. It would make the superintendent nurse the superior female officer, and the matron was appointed as such.

"The efficient training of probationers in workhouses is an impossibility. The nature of the cases under treatment does not allow of a sufficiently comprehensive experience, even though the medical work is sometimes very good and varied.

"Workhouse wards should therefore be staffed by nurses holding a three-years' certificate from a general hospital or infirmary.

"The 'Orders' for the matrons of workhouses and infirmaries require revision, as they were drawn up when the conditions were different. A matron undertakes duties of great responsibility after years of arduous training, and should therefore be in direct communication with her committee. I have no hesitation in saying that this arrangement, which is only just to the matron, would be found most satisfactory to the authorities.

"To the medical officer she would be responsible for the proper carrying out

of his directions for the care of the sick, but for all business matters of her department she would be directly responsible to the committee.

"It seems to me that many of the present difficulties would be met by the formation of an Advisory Committee on nursing matters in connection with the Local Government Board. I would suggest that some of the members of such a board should be experts on nursing, that the inspection of nursing matters should be under it, and that the secretary should be a fully-trained nurse. This central department would formulate a uniform standard of training and examination."

Another interesting conference to which the council sent a delegate was that of the British Gynaecological Society, at the request of the same, to consider the gynaecological and obstetrical training of nurses.

The report tells of the active work going on in the education of the public on State registration, and of the work of its members in other countries says:

"In New South Wales the Australasian Trained Nurses' Association, of which Miss McGahey, honorary member of the Matrons' Council, is honorary secretary, is doing excellent work in nursing organization, and in improving the standard of nursing education. The council of the association has drawn up regulations dealing with the recognition of hospitals and the training and certification of nurses, and requires a report from each recognized hospital, giving details of the work carried out, at the end of each year.

"The Victorian Trained Nurses' Association states that the movement for establishing a uniform system of training, examination, and registration of nurses has been successfully inaugurated and accepted throughout the country. It has published a list of hospitals recognized by its council as training-schools for nurses, has instituted an independent examination, and appointed a conjoint board of medical and nursing examiners.

"Friendly negotiations with the Australasian Trained Nurses' Association have resulted in the establishment of a basis for uniform as well as reciprocal action in regard to the registration of members and their removal from the register for breaches of discipline, the recognition of hospitals as training-schools, and the withdrawal of recognition when the teaching is deemed insufficient and unsatisfactory, or for other reasons."

We would much like to know with what amount of meekness hospitals in Australasia will submit to being not recognized as training-schools? Can we imagine the size of the cyclone if in this country some small private or special hospital which pretended to train nurses should be "withdrawn from recognition" for "insufficient and unsatisfactory teaching"? But in Australasia all women, including nurses, possess the ballot, and are thus able to take a direct part in public affairs, including the management of their hospitals, while we, at the end of seventy million years, are still employing the methods of primitive woman in advancing what we think are our interests, namely, playing off one man against another to gain our ends.

NOTES OF THE INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL OF WOMEN

THE time of the next great international congress of women is drawing close,—June, 1904, only little more than a year off,—and the nurses in our organized societies at home should be letting their thoughts run forward to this time, for many, perhaps, could contrive to attend this most interesting and inspiring gathering if they began now arranging for such a trip. We are told that if we want very much to do anything, we can almost certainly bring it about

by "fixing the mind" on it. It is therefore much to be hoped that many of our leading nurses will "fix their minds" on this event in the future. The executive meetings of the International lately reported give an idea of the tremendously earnest moral force which impels these gatherings, and show the universal movement of modern women in all civilized countries towards the investigation and critical study of every branch of civic and national conditions relating to the welfare of their own sex and to that of children and the dependents of society.

For our own immediate circle of nurses, the special meaning and stimulus of our affiliation with this world-wide federation comes in this—that our special knowledge and training may be used in helping to frame and further preventive and constructive work, thus offering our women opportunity to exercise all their faculties; not only those submissive and uninquiring qualities of tender-heartedness which have led the nurses of all ages to the relief of suffering, but also those more animated and effective qualities which would impel them to protest against and denounce the needless and preventable causes of suffering which they continually see.

The meek and silent sister of an older ideal who served with her hand and heart only, merely making it a little easier for things to keep on being wrong, stirs our anger rather than our admiration, and we rejoice in the promise of the modern trained nurse, who is also an educated woman holding a sufficiently important social position, to use her head and conscience as well. Notes from the Press Committee of the International Council follow:

NATIONAL COUNCIL OF DENMARK.

"The members of the Press Committee will have received already the account of many important changes lately made in the Factory Act of that country, the efforts that have been made lately to secure the municipal franchise for women, and the account of a petition sent by the Danish Council to the Minister of Justice containing suggestions and wishes which he was asked to consider in framing a bill concerning ill-treated and criminal children, as well as many other items of interest that concern the women of that country."

NATIONAL COUNCIL OF GREAT BRITAIN.

"Among the subjects to be discussed will be 'University Education for Women, Its Effect on Social and Intellectual Life,' 'The Present Position of Women's Suffrage,' 'Public-House Trusts,' 'Wage-Earning Children,' 'The Outlook for Women at Home and in the Colonies,' 'The Permanent Care of the Feeble-Minded,' 'The Relation of Amusements to Life,' 'to Health,' 'to Education,' 'Popular Amusements for Working-Girls.' Papers on rescue work among women and children, papers on organization and committee work, and a special meeting for young ladies will make the time seem all too short for those who are present. It is of special interest to the members of the Canadian Council to know that one of their workers, Miss Fitzgibbon, is to be the speaker for the 'Outlook for Women in the Colonies,' together with Miss Mabel Malleson, of South Africa."

NATIONAL COUNCIL OF HOLLAND.

". . . Our Society of National Women's Labor has done a fine thing in organizing a way of pensioning working women by making possible an insurance

whereby the premium may be augmented or may be diminished, or, indeed, stopped in times of need, while whatever was paid continues 'to keep' its value. It is expected that this will prove an immense value to women workers, domestic servants, teachers, shop girls, etc., if only they may be made to feel the importance of insuring themselves very early in life. It is a great thing also that the municipality of Amsterdam, wishing to increase the supervision in its public schools, decided to create the post of inspector of the same, and it was immediately resolved that one of the four persons named for this most honorable and well-salaried post should be a woman."

NATIONAL COUNCIL OF NEW ZEALAND.

Mrs. Wells sends a bright and very interesting account of the seventh meeting of the National Council held last May in Napier. She says: "Our programme included papers and addresses on 'The Duty of the State to Neglected and Destitute Children,' 'Education,' 'Culture,' 'Prison Reform,' 'Removal of Civil and Political Disabilities,' 'Economic Independence of Married Women,' 'Equal Wage for Equal Work,' 'Man's Rights, Woman's Claims,' 'Illegitimacy,' 'Municipal Reform,' 'Political Reform,' 'Old-Age Pensions,' 'Peace and Arbitration,' 'The Trend of the Woman Movement in New Zealand,' 'Food Reform,' 'Domestic Service,' 'Temperance,' 'Gambling.' In response to the request of the president of the International Council it was resolved to hold meetings all over New Zealand in May, 1903 and 1904, to further the ideals of peace and arbitration. An Education Committee was formed to forward a better and more comprehensive system of education, recognizing the responsibility of the State towards each child in it so that he or she may be adequately prepared to gain a livelihood. The principle embodied in the resolutions on the subject of 'Illegitimacy' has gained many adherents throughout New Zealand, and already it has resulted in the Wanganui Charitable Aid Board passing a motion to be forwarded to all other Charitable Aid Boards in New Zealand and also to Parliament in favor of illegitimate children being registered in the father's name as well as in the mother's, and also that the father should be held responsible for their maintenance and education until the age of sixteen is attained. For years the women of New Zealand have been praying that all civil and political disabilities should be removed from women, but although they have the parliamentary suffrage, as yet their prayer has been in vain. It was therefore resolved at this meeting of their council that a sub-committee should attend the session of Parliament then sitting in order to plead publicly for the removal of these disabilities."

NATIONAL COUNCIL OF VICTORIA.

"This council, which is not yet a year old, is evidently making rapid growth and progress, and has already secured the federation of a large number of representative societies. One of the first pieces of work undertaken by this council was that of trying to bring about the appointment of police matrons in gaols and lock-ups where women are detained. Mrs. Watson Lister, B.A., their bright and enthusiastic secretary, writes: 'You will, I am sure, be delighted to hear that New South Wales has now fallen into line and women have the vote there—the bill passed the Upper House last week. The members resisted it to the last, but the Government brought such pressure to bear that they were forced to give in. In Victoria the Suffrage Bill is incorporated with the Reform Bill which has passed the Lower House, and from all we hear is likely to go through

the Upper House, so that we are hopeful now that the end of the year will see the triumph of the suffrage movement in Victoria. The possession of the Federal and State vote must necessarily make the work of the National Council much more effective."

NATIONAL COUNCIL OF ARGENTINA.

"The accounts received from this council continue to show an increased interest on the part of the federated societies, and the meetings have been made attractive by well-written papers on a variety of important subjects. One of these papers is of especial value, and it has for its subject 'The Women of Argentina.' In answer to the charge that has been made, that the Argentine women are frivolous and superficial creatures, the writer gives much information as to the various professions and occupations in which many of them are now making for themselves a good reputation. She says: 'From the year 1899 till the year 1901 forty-eight young ladies were matriculated in the National College. There are at present eighteen girl students at the university; five of these are studying medicine, thirteen are dental students, six are taking the course in arts and philosophy, and one is studying engineering. The profession most favored by the Argentine women is teaching. It was stated that in December, 1901, there were fourteen hundred and fifty-nine lady teachers employed in the primary schools of this capital and only three hundred and eighty-three men teachers. They also occupy the post of professors in the higher education.'"

NATIONAL COUNCIL OF FRANCE.

"This council has now a federation of forty societies, with a membership of some twenty-eight thousand women. In the December number of *Le Journal des Femmes*, which is edited by Madame Maria Martine, an interesting account is given of the November meeting of the council, at which Madame Martine was selected a member of the Executive Committee. One of the subjects under discussion was that of the proper disinfection of tenement houses in the case of infectious diseases, such as tuberculosis and others. Several admirable suggestions were made, which it was decided should be sent to 'La Commission d'hygiene.' The Committee on Legislation presented through Madame Oddo-Deflou a full report upon the subject of illegitimacy, which contained a number of suggestions concerning the law on the matter, the result of exhaustive study, which received unanimous approval of the council. The other councils that are also specially interested in this important subject should write to Madame Martine, 31 Rue Francœur, Paris, for a copy of this paper, which also contains a very appreciative notice of the death of Mrs. Elizabeth Cady Stanton and of her life and work."

NATIONAL COUNCIL OF CANADA.

"This council has had many reasons for encouragement this season, five new local councils having been added to the list. Copies of the last annual year-book, 'Women Workers of Canada,' have been sent to each of the other councils, and it hoped that they may be seen by the members of the Press Committee in each country also. This council feeling the need of being able to bring before the notice of all the members of the federated societies the work and aims of the council, and of the other councils also, has begun the publication of a little quarterly called *The Messenger*, which is sold very cheaply, and which it is hoped may grow in time to be a monthly paper worthy of so great a cause."

LETTERS

WE are now in the land where one must wear sun-helmets, or sun-shades with green lining. Violets, wall-flowers, peach-blossoms, and wild-roses are all in bloom.

When we arrived we had our breakfast in a most beautiful orange-garden, and had the fruit fresh from the trees.

The peach and apricot trees were covered with bloom, and these with the golden oranges made a very pretty picture.

They spread our table on the veranda, and we had Persian bread, eggs (boiled, but no spoons), coffee, and oranges.

Some trees here have a species of fern growing on them, and others are almost covered with ivy, while flowers of every variety of color abound. It is difficult to describe the place. Of course, no women are visible.

Our Armenians buy the supplies, cook our meals, and the people drink tea all day long. One sees shopkeepers with glasses of tea in every office; even this morning while at the bank little glass mugs of tea, with a great deal of sugar and no milk, were served.

Our party here has four houses in a large compound. These compounds resemble somewhat a large park or garden inclosed in high mud walls. A fountain plays in the centre, and the rooms open on this court, so that one has always to go out-of-doors to go from one room to another. My own room will be on the roof, and I will have to go up an outside staircase and walk about one hundred yards to get to it.

Across the city is a beautiful large American hospital, closed at present waiting for a doctor. I have been in the hospital a great deal this week trying to get things straightened up for the opening. The builders are repairing two rooms, but as everything is mud here, building is such dirty work.

For helpers in the men's hospital I will have Armenians who are already partly trained. Paul Peter is first, and he considers himself quite a doctor. He administers chloroform on operation-days and is able to take the dispensaries. Aritoon and Avidick are seniors; one has charge of the operating-room, the other the wards; then as nurses I have Stephen, George, and Solomon. We have a cook, two servants, and a gatekeeper, besides a woman to wash and mend. Fortunately, six of these speak English. The women and children go to the public bath-house once a week, and that is the only time the hair is combed or their clothes washed or taken off. At night they just remove one outside garment, roll themselves in a big quilt, and lie on a mattress on the floor. They even have their heads covered.

On Sunday we had our first operation in the hospital,—an emergency,—and since then we have had eleven within two weeks, besides many minor operations, such as removing tonsils, etc., which I have not counted. You would be surprised to see our wards. Iron bedsteads from England, with mattresses of chopped straw,—which are slipped into a print cover,—pillows of the same material, and heavy comforters, which are a delight to the patients, all covered with the same material.

The patients are all in bed with their clothes on—even their caps they never part with.

We put them in hospital-clothes, consisting of blue trousers made very wide

and tied around the waist with a drawing-cord, a blue shirt, a red jacket, and sometimes a blue cotton coat over that.

The hospital also is a compound with a garden in the centre and walls all around.

The first room to the left is the dispensary, on the opposite side the consulting-room for out-patients, a large waiting-room, and two small examining rooms; then comes the assistants' room, then the doctors' private room, then a small ward. Up the outside stair we enter two private rooms; then after a walk over the roof come to a ward with six beds, all occupied; next this ward is the operating-theatre with a large square hall in front of it. Beyond is a ward of three beds, then the eye ward, and next this my own room, with a pretty, blue-tiled floor and stained windows.

There is little to speak about except my work, for we seldom go out except for a walk to the desert, or sit on the roof for an hour's rest.

At first we had to call upon all Europeans (it is the custom of the country for newcomers to call first).

The hospital is more than full, and we have some patients sleeping on the floor.

My days are very busy. I get up at five-thirty, breakfast at six-forty-five, hospital seven-thirty, and remain there until eight P.M., when I return for dinner. Persian service is at eight A.M., consequently hospital work must be well done before that hour.

The question of moving the hospital to Ispahan is now under consideration. The Prince, who is a brother of the Shah, has forbidden us to build a new hospital yet.

The indoor dress of the women consists of a shirt, a pair of long trousers, and a very short skirt—the length is supposed to be the span of their hand; they wear this about four inches below the waist. In the winter season they wear a cotton coat in addition to this, and on the street their costume consists of very full bloomers with feet, a cotton coat, and chuddie.

I am the only woman in the hospital, consequently am a constant source of curiosity to the men patients.

To-morrow we have six operations.

The women complain of queer diseases, often declaring they have an animal running around inside the head. They also claim to have "bands," but no doctor has yet been able to find out what they mean by that term. They are always much pleased to be told they have a "band" but rather offended if the diagnosis happens to be anything like rheumatism.

Sometimes they consult the doctor, telling him many symptoms, but ending with, "That is well now." "Well, what is the matter now?" said the doctor, but though she started many times, she always ended in the same way.

Miss B. goes twice a week to massage a Persian lady, the daughter of a Prince. They send a carriage and pair for us, so we always go in style. The patient lies on a mattress on the floor, with rich brocaded silk bolsters to prop her up. About five or six friends all arrayed in rich silks sit around the bed, also the children. There are also six women-servants in attendance, one swaying a fan with a handle about four feet long. Chairs are provided for us, but the others sit on the floor. After about twenty salutations we are given our tiny glass of tea.

When the limb has been massaged we hold out our hands over a curious brass

basin and a servant pours water over them, then a black page brings us ices and iced drinks, fruits, and cucumbers cut up in syrups.

Housekeeping here is quite a problem, for servants are far from honest according to our idea. They count it all right to charge a percentage on everything. An honest man pockets a little and is not dishonest until he is found out. Last week we bought four hundred eggs. One supply only—forty-four—had been taken out. I counted them before the cook to his surprise, and to my surprise found two hundred and ninety-eight when there should have been three hundred and fifty-six. I tell you this to show you what housekeeping in Persia is like, and you must remember my cook is a very honest one.

H. D. McKim,

C. M. S. Hospital for Men, Julfa, Ispahan, Persia,
Graduate Toronto General Hospital Training-School for Nurses, Class of 1896.

ITEMS

MRS. KINNEY kindly sends some items from the Philippines. She says: "A letter from the Philippines announces the death of the Woman's Hospital after a long and futile struggle for existence. There is a movement on foot, headed by Bishop Brent, to meet the great needs of the city of Manila by erecting in its place a large civil hospital. The association of Bishop Brent with the enterprise practically assures its success, and it appears that no effort is being spared to secure the very best help possible in all directions. It is supposed that the superintendency will be offered to an ex army-nurse."

A later note sent by Mrs. Kinney says that Commissioner Ide has donated ten thousand dollars to the Manila General Hospital fund.

A pathetic little paragraph appeared in the *Manila American* some time since describing the funeral services of Miss Hannah M. Niehoff, who was laid to rest in the National Cemetery in the presence of all the army-corps nurses and civil nurses of the city.

MRS. QUINTARD writes from Havana: "We have many things that might interest you, for while the affairs of the schools are not always running smoothly, and the progress is slow, the schools are doing well and we have some reason to feel encouraged. In June we shall graduate another class of about ten pupils. Of the seven graduated last October, all are employed in hospital positions, and the reports of their work are most satisfactory."

